

Appl. No.: 10/606,317
TC/A.U.: 3711 Docket No.: C02-29
Reply to Office Action of August 16, 2005

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9, and 23, appear in this application for the Examiner's review and consideration.

Claims 8 and 10-22 have been cancelled without prejudice to Applicants' right to file one or more continuing applications directed to any subject matter not presently claimed.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the inflated composite core, not only seals the opening in the rear cavity and is visible, but it actually forms part of the exterior body of the club head. This sets it apart from prior art hybrid or iron type club heads. Support for this is found in the specification on page 2, lines 11-13, page 5, lines 10-11, and 20-22.

Rejection Over McKay, Jr. et al. In View of Nagai et al.

Claims 1-5, 7, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,904,628 issued to McKay, Jr. et al. in view of U.S. Publication No. 2004/0023730 to Nagai et al. McKay teaches a hollow club head in the shape of a driver or other wood club (col. 4, lines 1-2), and an inflated bladder made from thin sheet or film material (Col. 5, lines 31-37, and Col. 6, lines 40-44) and McKay is very specific that the inflated bladder and any composite core conforms with and engages the entire inner surface of the casing (Col. 5, lines 39-41, Col. 6, lines 62-65, and in Claim 1). McKay never refers to the possibility of an inflatable bladder process being used in "hybrids" or "irons" except when discussing shafts (Col. 9, lines 18-21). This is because his design would not be feasible for a 35-50 cc golf club head. The most important concept of the Applicants' invention is stated in their claim 1, which is that the inflated composite core is visible and forms part of the exterior rear portion of the club head, as shown in FIGS. 1, 2, and 4 of the specification.

Nagai does not cure the deficiency of McKay. To cure the deficiency of McKay a reference must be presented that teaches the use of an inflated composite core forming the rear portion of a hybrid or "iron" type golf club head. That is the novelty of the

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Applicants invention. No reference cited in this or any previous office actions disclose this concept.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is believed to have been overcome for at least the above reasons. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Rejection Over McKay In View of Kobayashi

Claims 1-3, and 7, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over McKay, Jr. et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,421,577 to Kobayashi. Again the Applicants must respectfully disagree with this rejection based on the above remarks that the McKay patent does not disclose a visible inflated composite core and Kobayashi does not cure this deficiency.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is believed to have been overcome for at least the above reasons. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Rejection Over McKay In View of Nagai et al. and further in view of Iwata et al.

Claims 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over McKay in view of Nagai and further in view of U.S. Publication 2001/0055996 to Iwata et al. Iwata et al. is generally directed to a citation of Coefficient of Restitution.

The Applicants realize that claim 6 is only patentable based on the addition of further limitations on an independent claim and its patentability is based on the totality of its dependence on claim 1 being allowed. Clearly Iwata et al. does not suggest the utilization of a composite core material forming the rear portion of the club head by means of an inflated bladder process and therefore does not cure the deficiency of the primary reference.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is believed to have been overcome for at least the above reasons. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

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Rejection Over McKay In View of Nagai and further In view of Galloway et al.

Claims 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over McKay in view of Nagai and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,354,962 to Galloway *et al.* Galloway is generally directed to the coefficient of restitution as a function of a variable front face thickness. As in the above response, the Applicants base the patentability of claim 6 on the totality of the claim as it further defines an allowed claim 1. None of these references suggest that McKay would have learned the possible use of an inflated composite core to provide the rear portion of the club head.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is believed to have been overcome for at least the above reasons. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Rejection Over McKay In View of Nagai and further in view of Hasebe or Toyota

Claims 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over McKay in view of Nagai and further in view of Hasebe or Toyota.

It is not the intent of claim 23 to disclose limitations as to the thickness of the bladder layer but rather the thickness of the composite core. This claim was added to the original claims to further define that the thickness of the composite core must be somewhat substantial, in order for it to serve as the exterior surface for the rear portion of the club head. As was claim 6, as discussed above, the patentability this claim is based upon its totality on an allowed claim 1. Again there is no suggestion in any of these references that provide McKay the possible connection to use an inflated composite core to provide the rear portion of the club head.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is believed to have been overcome for at least the above reasons. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

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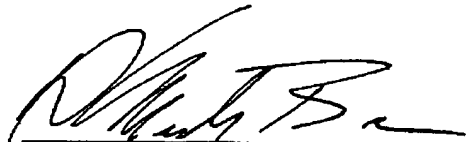
Conclusion

Based on the remarks set forth above, Applicants believe that all of the rejections have been overcome and the claims of the subject application are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any further concerns or believe that a discussion with the Applicants' agent would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the agent at the number below.

No fee is believed to be due for this submission. However, should any required fees be due, please charge them to Acushnet Company Deposit Account No. 502309.

Respectfully submitted,

Oct 11, 2005
Date


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